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The Globally Governed—Everyday Global Governance

Thomas G. Weiss and Rorden Wilkinson**

Our purpose is to establish the value of looking at global governance from the point of view of those who are governed, thereby making them more visible in a field in which they have often had too little profile. This is a necessary addition to an evolving global governance scholarship that seeks to highlight greater sensitivity to issues of complexity, time, space, continuity, and change. We explore recent advances in the literature emphasizing that while much has been done to enhance global governance as an analytical endeavor, far more intensive efforts are required to reflect the everyday experiences of the globally governed. Three examples of everyday global governance illustrate how more meaningful research could be accomplished and the potential pay-offs that could result. **KEYWORDS:** global governance; the everyday; international organization; international law; world order.

Global governance evokes images of well-paid and well-fed international bureaucrats in New York and Geneva, world conferences in glamorous cities on issues of planetary significance, and geopolitical wrangles about appointees to visible positions in the public and private sectors. It does not evoke images of refugees in Breidjing, Chad; grain traders in Khanna, India; or sex workers in Tijuana, Mexico. Yet the latter's lives are at least as dramatically shaped—sometimes intimately so—by global governance than the former's.

Remarkably, the scholarly and policy literatures say very little about how refugees, grain traders, and sex workers—among many others—receive and encounter global governance, which for us constitutes a genuine puzzle. The life experiences of those living in refugee camps are shaped in large measure by the actions and presence (or lack thereof) of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UN relief agencies as well as the interference from gangs, human traffickers, paramilitaries, and insurgency forces. The same can be said for the wellbeing of grain traders in Khanna whose fortunes are intimately linked to the performance of national, regional and global markets as well as to the policies and programs of myriad financial and aid institutions. Likewise, flows of cross-border trade are affected by the actions and activities of firms large and small, numerous international agreements, commercial and otherwise, and fluctuations in global currency markets, which in turn have an effect on economic and other activities in border towns, including on the health and welfare of sex workers—members of the “global precariat”¹ whose lives are also affected, positively and negatively, by the contributions and omissions of numerous international agencies.

Along with countless others—including the disgruntled supporters of Brexit, Donald Trump, and far-right populist parties—these three groups are part of the globally governed: populations whose past, present, and future behavior is directly influenced by the actions and activities of myriad actors and institutions that we commonly consider part of contemporary global governance. What is striking, however, is that few inquiries actually deal with the globally governed as primary objects of study despite a glut of recent work that has sought to expand the range of global governance investigations.² The result is that the field remains focused firmly on understanding

who governs and how they do it, rather than who *is* governed and how that governance is experienced. Not surprisingly, the top of the food chain gets more attention than the bottom.

Our aim is to bring the globally governed squarely into the analytical cross hairs of inquiries into global governance: what is the impact of examining world order from the bottom-up rather than the top-down? This approach is stimulated by recent scholarship that probes the implications of reversing perspectives in examining normative advances. One of the more consequential normative movements in this century, for instance, was away from humanitarian intervention and toward the responsibility to protect; the central rationale was shifting from the rights of interveners to those of victims.³ Similarly, a special section of this journal pointed to the overlooked or ignored southern origins of several key global norms;⁴ but even those contributors did not reflect sufficiently the point of view of the consumers of global governance.

We begin by situating our endeavor within diverse and emerging, but as yet incomplete, conceptual developments in global governance scholarship. Here we show how the process of making global governance more analytically robust—a long overdue and until recently much neglected task—requires not only that complexity, time, and space as well as issues of continuity and change be taken into account, but also that the analytical net be cast wide enough so that global governance is viewed from the ground up and its receipt (as well as the life experiences of those that receive it) understood. We then explore why reversing the analytical optic in this way is so essential, both in analytical and policy terms, by examining how our examples of three types of individuals experience everyday global governance in order to suggest the true significance on the lives of the globally governed.

Global Governance, the State of the Art

There are reasons why the globally governed are absent from our purview.⁵ Conceptually, the close association between the term “global governance” and what international organizations do has overly determined the extent to which this field has proceeded along an evolutionary path wherein the words “global” and “governance” have become descriptors for the collective action of intergovernmental institutions. It may also be that the scholarly tendency to read global governance—its history, content, and drivers of change—from the vantage point of Washington, London, Brussels, or Geneva has compounded matters and concentrated minds on the art of governance rather than its consequences, on the governors rather than the governed. Moreover, this perspective may reflect the fact that many scholars who study global governance come from countries at the core of global decision-making and have analytical radars insufficiently tuned to looking at both sides of the governance equation. In addition, studying those on the receiving end of global governance requires the kind of fieldwork and investigation into primary sources for which few international relations scholars are equipped, and how we could learn from our counterparts in anthropology.⁶

Much global governance scholarship tends to focus on the visible institutions at the center of global problem-solving and policy-making and their “gridlock,”⁷ but it stops short of how their power and influence flow outwards to recipients. The result has

been to restrict global governance to questions of institutional design and construction, and to policy development and delivery. Absent is how global governance is experienced—that is, the way it is encountered. To be comprehensive, or even make sense, global governance must address such shortcomings.

There are other reasons why we should correct this gaping oversight in our analytical industry. In the current era, much of the practice of governing globally originates in the Global North. This is—to paraphrase Deborah Avant, Martha Finnemore, and Susan Sell—where most of the global governors reside, work, and play.⁸ In contrast, many of the recipients of global governance are in the Global South; and its most acute effects are often experienced there by the most vulnerable citizens (women, children, the elderly, and indigenous peoples). This reality does not mean that the effects of, and strong perceptions about, global governance are absent in the North, as disgruntled voters demonstrated amply in the 2016 referendum on the UK’s departure from the European Union (EU) and the election of the US’s 45th president. However, it does mean that many of the world’s most precarious communities have a more intimate relationship with global governance than do citizens of states where the global governors reside. The intimacy comes via, among many others, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Health Organization (WHO), Oxfam, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFCRC), and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) as some of the most recognizable players in contemporary global governance; it comes as well through connections with less commonly associated and often such less visible elements as transnational criminal networks, faith groups, and financial markets.

It is also the case that those populations on the receiving end of global governance seldom have access to, or a say in, decision-making to which they are subjected. This imbalance—and the vantage points from which we customarily view global governance—is more pronounced when we concentrate on the design and consequences of such institutions. Indeed, because we have studied the successes, failures, and impacts of global governance narrowly, we may have been complicit in perpetuating outmoded and ineffectual systems as well as perspectives that ignore recipients and their plights as well as restrict and constrain their agency.

Our aim is to begin attenuating these conceptual shortcomings by bringing the globally governed to the fore. This appeal is akin to previous clarion calls for international relations, international political economy, and peace studies to bring the “everyday” front and center.⁹ It is also part of a broader movement in global governance scholarship that seeks to continue the task of lending greater analytical precision to global governance, which has—since the first volume of this journal—been derided for its woolliness.¹⁰

Global Governance, New Frontiers

In spite of contemporary appearances, a body of literature treating global governance as more than the sum of its intergovernmental parts was present when the term first entered scholarly discourse at the outset of the 1990s.¹¹ However, this insightful academic work was overshadowed by the gusto with which the term was captured in the global public policy debate—including, for example, the Commission on Global

Governance.¹² The most visible and enduring use of “global governance” was as a blanket marketing and descriptive term for dealing with all aspects of international institutionalization. We should not underestimate how pervasive the term—and the common-sense meaning associated with it—has become. While two decades ago it was almost unknown, Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall quipped that ten years later it had “attained near-celebrity status ... [having] gone from the ranks of the unknown to one of the central orienting themes in the practice and study of international affairs.”¹³ Yet, despite this ubiquity—some 9 million hits in less than a second on a Google search—only recently has a new front of global governance work opened that seeks to fuse some of the earliest, imaginative work with new thinking to drive forward research, analysis, and teaching.¹⁴

Conceptual efforts on this new front reside largely in four distinct but related areas. First, scholars have sought to move beyond simple associations with the actions and activities of international organizations—intergovernmental (IGOs) and nongovernmental (NGOs) alike.¹⁵ Such work has ceased to use “global governance” as a convenient descriptor and instead as a set of questions into how world order is managed and arranged. Claims that global governance is more than the sum of actions by IGOs and NGOs has purchase because it invites analysts to pay more attention to a more extensive range of actors, institutions, and mechanisms such as credit-rating agencies, terrorist organizations, financial markets, philanthropic bodies, and a wide variety of civil society organizations and businesses.¹⁶

The necessity of building on one of the critical elements of first-generation global governance thinking has clear utility in enabling us to better grasp complexity. This insight is what clearly differentiated a focus on global governance rather than IGOs when James Rosenau and Ernst Czempiel first sought to comprehend “governance without government.”¹⁷ This optic opened analytical purview to the role that a host of non-state actors could and were playing in shaping world order as well as the degree to which it was governed by vast, complex, evolving regimes.¹⁸ In turn, studies began to explore novel and discrete elements of global governance as well as networks actors.¹⁹ It also encouraged analysts to look beyond the institutional and the material to the ideational, and its crucial role in governing the globe.²⁰ This work ranged across grand ideologies and their generation,²¹ and it helped push forward understandings of why often hidden forms of power and authority resided in complex systems of governance.²²

Second, by presenting global governance as an enquiry into how world order is managed, scholars have occasionally gone beyond the specific moment in time with which it has come to be associated. While the term emerged, and was intimately associated with post-Cold War efforts to realize the full potential of the United Nations and the possibilities of working with an array of non-state actors, pertinent questions extend far beyond that moment. Yet, the association with a normative project to realize the UN’s potential as imagined by its founders²³—whether working in concert with a range of other actors or not—and its use as a convenient label for what international organizations do, froze the term in time and thereby reduced its analytical utility. Inquiries into the arrangement and governance of world order should have imbued global governance with a broader sensitivity to time—an understanding that the actors, institutions, and mechanisms that govern world order

today are the outcome of departures from and evolutions in earlier systems of governance.²⁴

Robert Cox, in a notable early contribution, specifically drew attention to different types of global governance across time;²⁵ yet only a few scholars have sought to be historical in their understanding of and engagement. Even then, most of this work has focused on the history of modern international organization rather than the governance of world orders long past—for instance, the Holy Roman, Ottoman or British Empires. As Craig Murphy has put it, “no social scientist or historian is yet able to give a credible account of global governance over ... many millennia.”²⁶ Even less has been done on future configurations of global governance, with most work in this area confined to thinking about the prospects for a world state.²⁷

Third, while the turn to history—and, more properly, historical change—promises to bear analytical fruit despite the tenacious focus on international organization, another pressing problem has been the spatial aspects of global governance. The association between the term “global governance” and the post-Cold War moment has perhaps had its most pernicious impact here. For many, what enabled a conversation about *global* governance was the existence for the first time of organizations whose reach spanned, and spoke on behalf of, the planet. Thus, when the Cold War ended hopes were raised that existing universal organizations (especially the UN system) would overcome previous narrow nationalisms and ideological fractures, and advocate for an updated version of one-worldism.²⁸ More recently, the connection between *global* governance and the *globe* has been reinforced by recognition that we have entered a new epoch in world history defined by the total human domination of the planet. In the Anthropocene, more than at any other time, it makes sense to speak of *global* governance.²⁹

However, if space is applied in such a strictly defined fashion, we are unable to understand how global governance has evolved from previous world orders, or could in the future from the current one. Hence, this approach incorrectly assumes that for global governance to be historically useful, a sense of the globe would have to match our own—that is, encompass every corner of the planet. A more accurate understanding is that only today can we talk of global governance as of the Anthropocene. Global governance in prior eras concerned human-focused world orders that covered regions but were less than worldwide. In the nineteenth century—to use just one example—world order was governed by competing imperialisms, technologies of conquest and extraction, and ideologies of racial difference and hierarchy.³⁰ These elements combined to give shape to world order and defined the global governance of that period.

Fourth, one of the utilities of freeing global governance temporally and spatially is that it allows for more dynamic understandings of how systems of world order evolve and endure. One part of the story of the evolution of global governance lies in understanding how the Roman Empire bled into the Holy Roman Empire and how, in turn, European imperialism and missions of conquest evolved therefrom. Other pieces of the puzzle are to be found in examining and explaining how similar transitions took place in Africa (e.g., the Kingdoms of Zimbabwe and Empire of Mali), the Middle East (e.g., the Ottoman Empire and Khedivate of Egypt), Asia (e.g., the Mongol Empire of Gengis Khan and Han Dynasty), and Latin America (e.g., Aztec, Inca,

Mayan, and Olmec), as well as how any relations among these various regional systems of governance were managed.³¹ A further part of this story is to understand what causes key elements within these systems to change as well as endure. Another is to work out how fundamental departures in grand systems of governance occur as well as those factors that cause distributions of power to persist. In short, what explains change? And how do we account for inertia?

These four elements—complexity, time, and space along with the dynamics of continuity and change—promise to facilitate our comprehension of, as John Ruggie put it two decades ago, how the world “hangs together.”³² In combination, they encourage questions about how the world was ordered or governed across different historical and spatial epochs in ways that account for complexity, and more particularly help explain continuity and change *in* as well as types *of* global governance. Yet, they do not encourage us to understand how past, present, or future global governance is experienced by those who are governed. Without this fifth element, we are unable to comprehend completely the content, character, and functioning of systems of global governance. It is to this missing piece of the *problématique* that we turn.

Everyday Global Governance

We are not the first to use the term “everyday” global governance. As far as we can tell, Anne-Marie Slaughter holds that honor, although she was using it to describe a different phenomenon from what we have in mind.³³ Slaughter’s concern was the silent but extensive growth of transnational networks, especially judicial ones, and their impact. With the benefit of hindsight, what she was observing might be better described as a “quiet,” “under the radar,” or “creeping” global governance,³⁴ one that is hard to quantify and which evolves independently or quasi-independently of formal governmental and intergovernmental processes. Slaughter was not referring to the actual experience of being governed. Her insights are useful but do not help understand how that governance is experienced. Thus, her work was in the forefront of early twenty-first-century thinking but did not look through the other end of the looking glass. Yet the receipt of global governance, the lived experiences, and the actions and relationships that are essential to understanding the everyday.

How then ought we to understand the receipt of and encounters with global governance? To appreciate everyday global governance requires care in mapping existing governance in a given context. It also necessitates that the four other elements central to recent evolutions in thinking are taken into account. Thus, such a process should capture the scale and extent of global governance’s receipt, identify individual components, and plot the individual and combined effects among the various elements. The analytical process should be attentive to the complexity of global governance and not just the role of international organizations and institutions; and it should account for direct and indirect, formal and informal aspects. Moreover, it requires understanding the forms of behavior to which specific governance contexts give rise—here we require an appreciation of the effects on recipients’ behavior resulting from the individual and collective aspects of global governance. The analysis also necessitates grasping over time the patterns of change and continuity in local context and behavior. Likewise, some understanding is required of the capacity

of the governed to influence the shape and impact of the governance of which they are on the receiving end.

We can illustrate what a thorough enquiry into everyday global governance would resemble if we turn to the examples of the globally governed mentioned at the outset of this article: refugees in Breidjing, Chad; grain traders in Khanna, India; and sex workers in Tijuana, Mexico. They do not constitute the sum of the globally governed—everyone on this planet is affected by processes of global governance—but they do provide compelling instances of the variety of ways that global governance is received and experienced by some of the world's most precarious global communities. Moreover, while the challenges of establishing a future research agenda that takes proper account of everyday global governance are substantial—and the ethical issues complex—we nonetheless want to push our colleagues and ourselves in this direction.

Breidjing

We begin with trying to understand the regional and domestic sources of the long-standing civil war in the South of Sudan in addition to the more recent ones from the slow-motion genocide in Darfur, which produced the refugees in Breidjing (the largest refugee camp in Chad). Part of the picture would also involve tracing the outside peacekeepers from the African Union (AU) and the UN as well as the actions and inactions of such intergovernmental bodies as the AU Peace and Security Council, the UN Security Council, and the International Criminal Court (ICC). Of pertinence would also be arms sales and transfers mixed with the political economy of Sudan and its interactions with world markets, in particular in oil and to a lesser extent cotton.

These top-down elements are familiar, albeit overwhelmingly difficult to weave together. Appreciating their impact, nonetheless, also necessitates an investigation into the life experiences molded by residing in a UNHCR-run camp and the way that the policies, programs, and activities of that UN body and its governing council and donors relate to the actions and activities of a host of such other intergovernmental bodies as the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Clear distinctions should be established between the effects of such intergovernmental agencies on everyday life, recognizing that some have an intimate impact on everyday experiences while others have an indirect but nonetheless significant one. For instance, as the coordinating agency for the camp's organization and administration, UNHCR oversees many of the details of daily existence. OCHA's capacity to bring together coalitions of aid agencies and donors within given time frames also affects not only the speed and type of responses but also the plans for medium- to longer-term settlement, resettlement, education, training, and ultimately development.

Beyond this intergovernmental core, lives in Breidjing are shaped by the actions and activities of a host of general and special-interest humanitarian actors and NGOs—which in Chad include CARE International, Oxfam, the ICRC and the Red Cross of Chad, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit Committee, and the Lutheran World Federation among many others, large and small. The lives of refugees—who are overwhelmingly women, children

and the elderly—will also be shaped by their on-going relationships with insurgency and paramilitary forces.

Within the camp, life will initially be organized around crisis response: combatting the spread of diseases such as cholera, malaria and hepatitis E; establishing access to food and water, sanitation and medical supplies; providing shelter and temporary accommodation. As the camp becomes more established, a new phase opens, and life experiences steadily diverge. Administrative structures are established that delineate “official” refugees from their “unofficial” and unregistered counterparts. While the lives of the former are hardly easy, registration at least brings certain rights to rations of food, water, and firewood as well as access to basic services and identity papers. For the unregistered, life is even more precarious. When not formally recognized by camp officials, informal residents are more frequently searching for firewood outside of the formal boundaries of the site, which places women and girls (particularly) at risk from kidnapping as well as from rape and sexual assault.

The consequences of being a recipient of, or excluded from, a specific global governance program are manifest elsewhere. For instance, children born to registered refugees will, in time, be issued with birth certificates as markers of existence, citizenship, rights, and entitlements. They will likely reside in the better tents, be the first in the queue for medical treatment, and eventually gain access to limited education facilities. Those born to unregistered refugees, however, will live in makeshift structures and not UNHCR-provided tents, fare less well, be potentially stateless and without access to what little life improving opportunities may be available to their registered counterparts. Their lives will also be exploited by the nefarious actors who spring up to take advantage of failures and omissions in the provision of public goods by international organizations of all kinds. Those geographically and conceptually farther away from the safety net provided by humanitarian actors will be prey to insurgents and paramilitary groups, health crises, and shortages in essential goods. Moreover, the longer that it takes to broker a truce let alone a lasting solution to an armed conflict—often under the auspices of IGOs—and the more donor fatigue, the more likely that the already-vulnerable will confront the more pernicious aspects of global governance—for instance, of limited attention spans as many “emergencies” have now become preceded by the oxymoron adjective “permanent” (after five years).

Other external factors will also have a bearing on the everyday global governance of Breidjing’s denizens. Financial crises have an effect on donor willingness to fund relief missions; they partially explain the growing shortfalls in funding, which in turn—as happened following the 2008 financial crisis—reduce the size of food rations and medicine.³⁵ The willingness and success of international actors to address the sources of refugee flight also are pertinent. Longer-term solutions for an enduring peace in Sudan remain a distant hope to enable refugees and internally displaced persons to return home or be resettled. Likewise, the longer-lasting and more entrenched a conflict, especially when coupled with dramatic events elsewhere in the region, the more likely that donor attention will be diverted towards newer and more visible emergencies. Still other factors should enter our thick description: the influence of traffickers and gangs; counterfeit registration systems; brain drains from humanitarian actors to outside agencies; soaring local rents; and parallel economies, in the global and local marketplaces.³⁶

Khanna

For a grain trader in Khanna, Asia's largest market, the everyday effects of global governance are different, but the analytical impact no less challenging—and certainly no less complex and arduous. While we commonly recognize that the cost of a grocery basket is affected by global trade rules, we are less likely to think about how they influence the lives of Khanna's traders. Equally, we are less likely to take into account how long-run historical events—including the annexation of Punjab by the British East India Company in the mid-nineteenth century, the struggle for independence, partition, and regional geopolitics—have shaped livelihoods in that part of India.³⁷ Yet, to complete our understanding of everyday global governance, we need to situate our investigation within a wider, contemporary context.

Grain traders are connected to global governance via commodity markets that are local, national, regional, and global. The behavior of traders is shaped by the rules governing engagement with those markets—who is allowed to trade in a market, the social networks that facilitate access, where grain is stored, the systems used for quality-control, and health regulations. And their livelihoods are affected by market performance, financial crises, and a host of factors ranging from exchange rates to fluctuations in credit. However, their envelopment in the various webs of global governance does not end with the local application of international trade rules and an understanding of their place in a complex variety (both sizes and locations) of markets. Although farmers are connected to the Khanna grain market through procurement agencies and private buyers who sell their products for higher prices, local producers are also subject to more than just the market. Many participate in World Bank-underwritten and commercial microfinance schemes. They may have been the recipients of FAO projects and programs designed to boost production or related efforts to enhance nutrition, livelihoods, rural development, and sustainability. Moreover, they may be part of FAO-assisted national regimes for pest control or climate change mitigation. Related efforts may also have been mounted by bilateral donors and international NGOs.

More broadly, the effects of other national programs in which India participates also impact upon the lives of Khanna's grain traders and rural farmers. The effects may emanate from reforms required by IMF country-level agreements; the implementation and roll-out of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); New Delhi's efforts to gain an exemption for its national food-security legislation from World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments;³⁸ or WHO and UNICEF projects targeted at improving health and education in rural areas or for particular groups. India's involvement in these aspects of multilateralism are implemented alongside established relations with bilateral donors such as the UK Department for International Development's (DfID) operational plan and the work that overseas development agencies carry out in partnership with such NGOs as USAID's partnership with the Society for Research and Initiatives for Sustainable Technologies and Institutions.

Equally, the lives of Indian farmers and grain traders are shaped by the delivery of global programs to address adverse climate events, including measures necessary to make good on the December 2015 Paris Agreement (and the successes or failures thereof). Here, livelihoods are directly affected by the capacity of international programs to buttress adverse climate-induced incidents or to invest in measures to

prevent catastrophes or limit their impact. In addition, lives and livelihoods are influenced by the longer-term effects of scientific advancements and (the politics of) the use of new fertilizers, pest control, irrigation systems, agricultural mechanization, and measures to counter crop diseases. Equally, they are affected by programs that seek to promote other goals that rupture and change social relations on the ground: education and gender empowerment, good governance, and democratic representation, and an end to such practices as female infanticide and honor killings.³⁹ The lives of Indian farmers and grain traders are helped by aid projects that provide cellular telephones to facilitate mobile banking and the flow of remittances; WFP, UNDP, and IMF national programs; the activities of myriad NGOs; and the implementation of MDG and SDG projects and programs, among many others.

As with Breidjing's refugees, the lives of Khanna's farmers and grain traders are shaped by access to and exclusion from global programs for assistance and investment. Those who are excluded or have little or no access have prospects that diverge distinctly from those with access to local markets who are recipients of FAO-supported national programs to promote diversification away from grain farming to aquaculture (largely carp fish-farming), have direct or indirect aid from bilateral assistance programs (such as the USAID-Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Cereal System Initiative or DfID's infrastructure, inclusive growth, education, innovation, housing, skills development programs), or benefit from the efforts of myriad international organizations or civil society organizations.

Tijuana

By exploring another example, this time of sex workers in Tijuana, Mexico, we see not only further illustrations of the differing experiences of the globally governed but also anticipate the looming effects of profound possible changes in contemporary global governance from the election of US president Donald Trump—including attempts to build a wall on the southern border, a stated intention to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a more pernicious immigration regime, the impact of strong currency fluctuations, and threats to impose trade diverting tariffs on Mexican produced goods.⁴⁰ Although sex workers on the US-Mexico border are perhaps less visible than Breidjing's refugees and Khanna's farmers and grain traders, many dimensions of global governance are comparable. Researching an activity of questionable legality also brings challenges that we have not encountered in the previous examples. Blended with the obvious precariousness that sex workers face, they provide a compelling optic through which to comprehend everyday global governance.

Here the complexity of global governance goes far beyond the roles of IGOs and NGOs. In particular, the character of Mexico's relations with the United States and its immigration policies are weighty. How NAFTA is revisited, the historically low exchange rate of the peso, the effect of high tariffs, imposing physical boundaries and more muscular immigration regimes are factors that have not been as poignant variables in the two earlier cases. Nonetheless, the direct and indirect, formal and informal aspects of governance must be carefully identified and their interrelationships judiciously understood. The effects on behavior should be disaggregated in such a way that discrete aspects of global governance are understood as well as their sum, that the patterns of change and continuity in both the local context and behavior over time are appreciated, and the capacity of sex workers to

influence the shape and impact of the governance on which they are on the receiving end understood.

So how might a researcher proceed? To be effective, an investigation into everyday global governance in the sex industry in Tijuana should be situated as a barely legal and unevenly regulated economic activity. In large measure, demand is stimulated by the city's proximity to an international border and where supply reflects—among many other things—forced participation, trafficking, and slavery. In turn, this requires an understanding of the development of sex work in Mexico and the United States as well as in border regions between the two countries that are sensitive to legal, political, and economic factors. It requires an understanding of the particular political economy of a local area, including drugs and their trafficking and regulation, as well as the wider political economy in which they are enmeshed. And it necessitates a sensitivity to the broader geopolitics of US-Mexican relations on the demand for sex work, the supply of ancillary services (such as sexual health care) as well as prevailing ideas about the value, moral purpose, and organization of the sex industry.

The various actors and institutions shaping the lives of sex workers in Tijuana and their respective roles as formal or informal, direct or indirect agents are harder to map and all-too-often not everyday bill-of-fare for global governance scholars.⁴¹ Thus, documenting and understanding suppliers and clients—their history, rationale, culture, and evolution over time—as well as the precariousness of sex workers' lives requires clearly understanding the means (forcible or incentives) by which workers are brought to Tijuana and engaged (forcibly or otherwise) in the sex industry. It necessitates as well an understanding of WHO sexual health programs, the impact of university research designed to observe the effect of microfinance initiatives, the impact of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime's education program, the economic fortunes of companies in the region whose workers are sex work users, and the role and effects of religious groups in promoting or resisting particular sexual health efforts. It also requires understanding the flow of illegal immigrants from the Northern Triangle of Central America through Mexico who are routinely stranded or seek refuge in the border areas of the United States.

Care and attention is required in selecting individuals and groups for case studies. Any conclusions or propositions should be tempered by a consideration of specific time periods that could alter substantially aspects of global governance—such as the passage of new trans-border legislation, health care programs, or clampdowns on transnational trafficking and criminal activity. The spatial aspects of sex work—not just the features and changes in the industry's local geography but also the transnational and international aspects of trafficking, remittances, financial flows, credit schemes, HIV/AIDS programs—are especially problematic in this case. The Tijuana sex workers provide a compelling illustration of our earlier plea for bringing far more field-based research into the study of international relations, but they also throw up some of the thorniest issues, particularly with regard to protecting them from harm.

Sex workers in Tijuana also illustrate much that is common in the experiences of the globally governed. What they share with the traders and farmers in Khanna as well as with refugees in Breidjing is a lack of substantive representation in the programs and

actions that have a dramatic influence on their lives. While some experiences of what happens on the ground inevitably filter upwards to policy and decision makers in capitals and headquarters, local perspectives are usually diluted at best or absent at worst from the global governors whose focus invariably is the macro. Yet, the absence of adequate representation and feedback loops ensures that the capacity of recipients to have a say about systems of governance to which they are subjected or excluded is curtailed.

We also see likely marked differences between those who receive particular aspects of global governance and those who do not. Those with access to sexual health and drug rehabilitation activities provided by IGOs and NGOs are likely to fare better than those excluded or prevented from participating. Those caught up in the more nefarious aspects of global governance—for instance, sex workers trafficked by gangs and involved in illicit money-laundering, drugs, and guns—have life experiences dramatically different still. Piecing such experiences together and situating them alongside those of others among the globally governed helps us understand the effects of how the world is ordered. This more precise understanding should then enable us to work out more appropriate forms of governance that result in more progressive global, regional, national, and local public policies. In this way, such an inquiry should also help recapture some of the lost normative project of early contributions to the field.⁴²

Conclusion

Our purpose has been to set out the utility of looking up at global governance from the point of view of those who are governed—literally looking through the other end of Alice’s looking glass, which is distinct from the more top-down approaches that have largely dominated our own and other’s work. We are persuaded that we truly need to know much more about how the world is governed; how we have ended up with our current governance arrangements; and, most importantly, what kind of global governance that we ought to have—and how we should get there from here.

As social scientists, we are supposed to ask, “so what?” The answer should be obvious: adding the dimension of the globally governed is essential not only to sketching the macro-picture but also finding appropriate means to improve lives. Our emphasis has been on three examples of the truly forgotten in the Global South, but we have indicated the imperative to understand those experiencing the downsides of globalization and global governance worldwide.

We began by setting aside the overly close association between the term “global governance” and what international organizations do because that approach has overly determined the extent to which our field has proceeded in a path-dependent fashion that has treated the words “global” and “governance” as synonyms for collective problem-solving by IGOs and NGOs in the post-Cold War era. We then proposed moving beyond a-historicism and spatial globality to indicate that, with the right questions, global governance should provide insights about the ways that world orders, or human governance, occurred in all periods albeit with less than worldwide coverage. Finally, in exploring how global governance is received and encountered by individuals in Breidjing, Khanna, and Tijuana, we argued that we should struggle to comprehend all constituent influences; but in so doing we should not ignore the

individuals themselves. In order to overcome claims that global governance is too nebulous to bring into clear focus, an ambitious future research agenda requires looking toward overcoming the absence of feedback loops and the accountability gap between the governors and the governed.

We have argued elsewhere that the global governance of the 1990s and early 2000s is different from the kind of global governance that existed in the nineteenth century or the first millennium AD;⁴³ and certainly of tomorrow. Ultimately, we should recognize that global governance, if it makes sense at all, is not merely a descriptor for a post-Cold War pluralistic moment but rather a legitimate set of questions about how the world is ordered and organized in every historical period—and for individuals at the top and the bottom of the economic pyramid, of the globally governed no less than global governors.

Notes

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The authors are the editors of the Routledge Global Institutions Series and the forthcoming second edition of *International Organization and Global Governance* (2018).

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